

EXHIBIT 5  
DATE 3/31/09  
SB 343

**SB 343 Proponent Testimony  
Before the House Agriculture Committee  
On Behalf of the Clark Fork River Basin Task Force**

March 31, 2009

Representative Mike Jopek  
Chairman  
Agriculture Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Dear Chairman Jopek:

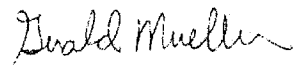
The Clark Fork River Basin Task Force (Task Force) urges the House Agriculture Committee to act positively on SB 343. The threat to Montana's waters from invasive species such as the quagga and zebra mussels and Eurasian Water Milfoil is real. As demonstrated in other states, these species can cause catastrophic damage to our waters and the uses they support. Montana needs to develop a program to protect against invasion of these species and to control them when they occur. SB 343 provides for both.

The Task Force is a statutorily authorized group tasked in 2001 with developing a water management plan for the Clark Fork River Basin and then in 2005 with preparing proposed amendments to the section of the State Water Plan addressing the Clark Fork River basin. By statute, members of the Task Force must be representative of the basin in terms of geography and water interests. A list of the current Task Force members is attached.

Please pass SB 343.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Gerald Mueller  
Task Force Facilitator

## Clark Fork River Basin Task Force

Name	Organization	Area/Interest Represented
Marc Spratt	Flathead Conservation District	Flathead Basin above Flathead Lake
Nate Hall	Avista	Hydropower Utilities
Holly Franz	PPL Montana	Hydropower Utilities
Gail Patton	Sanders County Commissioner	Basin Local Governments
Arvid Hiller	Mountain Water Company	Municipal water companies and the Clark Fork River Watershed between the confluence of the Blackfoot River and the Clark Fork River and the confluence of the Clark Fork River and the Flathead River
Caryn Miske	Flathead Basin Commission	Flathead Lake
Ted Williams	Flathead Lakers	Flathead Lake
Steve Hughes	Joint Board of Control	Flathead River watershed below Flathead Lake to the confluence with the Clark Fork River
Jim Elliott		Lower Clark Fork watershed
Harvey Hackett	Bitter Root Water Forum	Bitterroot River watershed
Fred Lurie	Blackfoot Challenge	Blackfoot River watershed
Jim Dinsmore	Granite Conservation District & Upper Clark Fork River Basin Steering Committee	Upper Clark Fork River watershed
Brianna Randall	Clark Fork Coalition	Conservation/environmental organizations
George Culpepper, Jr.	Flathead Building Association	Building industry in the Valley and in Lake County
Bill Gardner	Liberty Drilling	Montana Water Well Drillers Association
Verdell Jackson, <i>Ex Officio</i>	State Representative	Senate District 5